

Testimony Concerning HB5344 (Desmond's Law)
Judiciary Committee February 24, 2016
Kathleen Whelen

I would like to thank the Judiciary Committee for the opportunity to express my support of HB5344 – Desmond's Law.

I'm both an Employee and a Volunteer at a No Kill Shelter in Norwalk, CT. It's critical that prosecution of animal abuse is vigorously pursued and punished appropriately. To this end, having a human Animal Advocate in court can only bring the proper pressure to bear and ensure that these animals are HEARD! A slap on the wrist or a perfunctory dismissal are not sufficient to address this problem. It's now understood that animal abuse is related to abuse of a person. The Animal Advocate will be able to take these stories out of the realm of dry paperwork and into the light.

At the Shelter, we see the result of the abuse. Our staff works tirelessly to rehabilitate the dogs and cats who have been physically and emotionally injured by abuse. As the caretakers of these animals, we fervently wish to see cruelty and abuse acknowledged and punished.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify and I do hope you will strongly support this important piece of legislation.

Thank you,

Kathleen Whelen
Norwalk, CT 06854